THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) and (b) The Neutral Control Organization of Indian Railway Conference Association (IRCA) is functioning primarily as a quality control organization, which monitors the quality of repairs and maintenance activities at major Carriage and Wagon workshops and major Routine Over Hauling (ROH) depots of Indian Railways. In addition, it also assesses cost of damages/deficiencies caused to the freight stock inside the steel plants besides conducting special brake power checks and periodic surveys to assess wagons overdue Routine Over Hauling (ROH)/Perodical Over Hauling (POH).

Neutral Control Organization is not expected to make recommendations but to ensure following up of standard maintenance/ repair procedures at workshops/ROH depots in terms of extant instructions.

Import of components for locos

446. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether under transfer of technology, a target for manufacture assembly of 50 GM-type high horse-power locos was fixed during the period 1999—2002;

(b) if so, the number of locos that were manufactured during the above period and reasons for not achieving the target;

(c) whether components for manufacture of these locos were imported from abroad and if so, the reasons for not received them in time; and

(d) whether stores worth Rs. 95 crores remained blocked as a result thereof and if so, who was responsible for the loss?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) The tentative target for the manufacture of GM locomotives during the period 1999—2002, was 50 locomotives, which was later revised to 31 locomotives.

(b) 3 such locos were manufactured during the period 1999—2002. The target could not be achieved due to non-availability of components and assemblies required for the manufacture.

(c) A large number of components required for the manufacture of these locomotives were imported. Finalisation of tender cases involving imports took some time. The lead time for some of the components was long and there was mismatch in the delivery schedule of different components/assemblies.

(d) There was a temporary build up inventory worth Rs. 95 crores as on 31.3.2002, which was utilized for the manufacture of these locomotives in the year 2002-03. There was no loss to the Railways on this account.

Rail tunnel through Pir Panjal

447. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Railways has been able to achieve an engineering breakthrough in the construction of rail tunnel through Pir Panjal to link Kashmir Valley with the rest of the country and bring Srinagar on the rail map of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, the work on the project is likely to begin and be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL) : (a) to (c) The work of construction of new line from Udhampur to Baramulla is already in progress. This will involve construction of tunnel across Pir Panjal range. The construction of tunnel is likely to start during 2004-05 after necessary preparatory works. The project is targeted for completion by 15th August, 2007.

Development of East Coast Railway in Orissa

448. SHRI B.J. PANDA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that construction work of East Coast Railway in Orissa is moving at a snail pace;

(b) whether on account of lack of interest on the part of officials at the Centre, billions of rupees allocated to the Zone for construction of projects are lying unutilized and while no new projects are being implemented the old ones are yet to be completed; and